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AGO ltr 29 Apr 1980 ; AGO ltr 29 Apr 1980	

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DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
OFFICE OF THE ADJUTANT GENERAL  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20310

IN REPLY REFER TO

AGAM-P (M) (9 Oct 67) FOR OT RD-670246

19 October 1967

SUBJECT: ~~Operational Report~~ Lessons Learned, Headquarters,  
5th Battalion (AW) (SP) 2d Artillery CUA. ②

TO: SEE DISTRIBUTION

*Operational rept. for quarterly period ending 30 Apr 67.*

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2. Information contained in this report is provided to insure appropriate benefits in the future from Lessons Learned during current operations, and may be adapted for use in developing training material.

BY ORDER OF THE SECRETARY OF THE ARMY:

⑪ 9 Jun 67

*C. A. Stanfield*  
C. A. STANFIELD  
Colonel, AGC

Acting The Adjutant General

⑫ 17p.

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DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
HEADQUARTERS, 5TH BATTALION (AV)(SF) 2D ARTILLERY  
APO San Francisco 96266

1  
9 June 1967

SUBJECT: Operational Report - for Quarterly Period  
Ending 30 April 1967 (RCS-CSFOR-65) (U)

THRU: Commanding General  
II Field Force Vietnam Artillery  
APO US Forces 96266

Commanding General  
II Field Force Vietnam  
APO US Forces 96266

Commanding General  
United States Army Vietnam  
ATTN: AVC-DH  
APO US Forces 96307

Commander In Chief  
United States Army Pacific  
ATTN: GPOP-MH  
APO US Forces 96558

TO: Assistant Chief of Staff for Force Development  
Department of the Army  
Washington D. C. 20310

## Section I: (C) Significant Organization Activities

a. General: During the reporting period the battalion remained assigned to U.S. Army Vietnam, attached to II Field Force Vietnam with operational command exercised by II Field Force Vietnam Artillery. Batteries were further attached to maneuver elements under the operational control of II Field Force Vietnam. Battery A with the 1st and 5th Sections of Battery D (MG) 71st Artillery was attached to the 1st Infantry Division.

Group 4

Downgraded at 3 year intervals  
Declassified after 12 years

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30 April 1967, RCS-CSFOR-65 (U)

During the reporting period, the 1st and 5th sections of Battery D (MG) 71st Artillery were detached from Battery A and attached directly to the 1st Infantry Division when their respective areas of operations became widely separated. Battery B with the 2d and 6th Sections of Battery D (MG) 71st Artillery was attached to the 25th Infantry Division. Battery C with the 3d section of Battery D (MG) 71st Artillery was attached to the 1st Infantry Division until 16 April 1967, at which time the Battery returned to battalion base camp (YT127114) for a maintenance stand-down prior to future operations. On 24 April 1967, Battery C with 3rd Section of Battery D (MG) 71st Artillery was attached to the 9th Infantry Division. Battery D with 4th Section of Battery D (MG) 71st Artillery remained attached to the 25th Infantry Division. Battalion Headquarters & Headquarters Battery remained at the Battalion base camp (YT127114) and provided personnel, administrative and M-42 maintenance support for deployed batteries. Elements of the battalion supported the following operations: Gadsden, Junction City, Ala Moana, Fort Nisqually, Waialua, Makalapa, Manhattan, Task Force Dixie, Lam Son 67, Palm Beach and Sabre Thrust III, IV and V. On 23 March 1967, Battery I (SLT) 29th Artillery arrived in Vietnam and was attached to the 5th Battalion (AW)(SP) 2d Artillery. Upon becoming operational on 5 April 1967, the battery was deployed as follows: 1st platoon attached to the 1st Infantry Division Artillery, effective 7 April 1967 and supports 1st Infantry Division operations; 2d platoon attached to the 9th Infantry Division Artillery, effective 13 April 1967 and subsequently to Battery C, 5th Battalion (AW)(SP) 2d Artillery effective 24 April 1967 and supports 9th Infantry Division operations; 3rd platoon attached to Battery B, 5th Battalion (AW)(SP) 2d Artillery effective 5 April 1967 and supports 25th Infantry Division operations.

## b. Administration/Personnel:

### (1) Strength

5th Battalion (AW)(SP) 2d Artillery is organized under TOE 44-85F. Battery D (MG) 71st Artillery is organized under TOE 44-58T. Battery I, (SLT) 29th Artillery is organized under TOE 6-558E, with authorized and assigned strength as of 30 April 1967 as follows:

	<u>AUTHORIZED</u>			<u>ASSIGNED</u>		
	<u>OFF</u>	<u>WO</u>	<u>EM</u>	<u>OFF</u>	<u>WO</u>	<u>EM</u>
5th Bn (AW)(SP) 2d Arty	37	3	658	36	3	718
Btry D (MG) 71st Arty	2	0	112	1	0	139
*Btry I (SLT) 29th Arty	7	0	145	7	0	145

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## (2) Gains and Losses

	<u>GAINS</u>			<u>LOSSES</u>		
	<u>OFF</u>	<u>WO</u>	<u>EM</u>	<u>OFF</u>	<u>WO</u>	<u>EM</u>
5th Bn (AW)(SP) 2d Arty	1	0	92	3	0	24
Btry D (MG) 71st Arty	0	0	34	0	0	3
*Btry I (SLT) 29th Arty	0	0	2	0	0	0

\*Battery I (SLT) 29th Artillery arrived in-country on 23 March 1967 and was attached to 5th Bn (AW)(SP) 2d Arty for all purposes on that date.

## (3) Casualties during the period include

<u>TYPE</u>	<u>NUMBER</u>
Killed in action	4
Died of battle wounds	0
Wounded in action	52
Missing in action	0
Non-battle deaths	0

## (4) Personnel Management

(a) Ample number of replacement enlisted personnel are being received for unprogrammed losses. No problems are foreseen in the immediate future concerning personnel losses as long as the present flow of replacement personnel is maintained.

(b) A critical shortage of three (3) officers was created as a result of unprogrammed losses (one compassionate reassignment, one wounded in action and medically evacuated, and one reassignment due to termination of branch detail in Artillery).

## (5) Rest and Recuperation Program

(a) The following out-of-country R&R trips were taken by members of this organization:

<u>LOCATION</u>	<u>FEB</u>	<u>MAR</u>	<u>APR</u>
Hawaii	8	11	12
Hong Kong	8	7	9
Manila	2	1	3
Tokyo	9	11	12
Bangkok	7	9	11
Singapore	2	4	2
Taipei	8	10	10
Penang	3	4	3
Kuala-Lumpur	0	0	4

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(b) The following in-country R&R trips were taken by members of this organization:

<u>LOCATION</u>	<u>FEB</u>	<u>MAR</u>	<u>APR</u>
Vung Tau	17	12	13

(c) This headquarters R&R program operates within the allocations given to II Field Force Vietnam.

(6) Morale

The morale of the organization is high.

(7) Awards and Decorations

The following awards and decorations were presented during the reporting period.

<u>AWARD</u>	<u>NUMBER</u>
Soldier's Medal	3
Bronze Star Medal	14 w/V Device
	15 for service or achievement
Air Medal	0
Army Commendation Medal	8 w/V Device
	12 for service or achievement
Purple Heart	50
Good Conduct Medal	38

(8) Discipline, Law and Order

The following judicial and non-judicial actions were conducted during the reporting period:

Article 15	26
Summary Court Martial	0
Special Court Martial	0
General Court Martial	0

(9) Safety

During the reporting period there was an accident at one of the fire bases where elements of the battalion were deployed in which one man was seriously wounded. During a normal H&I mission being conducted in heavy rain, six or seven rounds out of a total of 20 prematurely detonated. After the rain subsided the ammunition of the same lot was fired again and no malfunctions occurred. TM 9-252 states "If the PD fuzes MK 27 are fired during extremely heavy rainfall premature functioning may occur."

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The rainfall necessary to cause such malfunctioning is comparable to the exceedingly heavy downpours which occur during summer thundershowers". The malfunction mentioned above has been attributed to the heavy rainfall and all elements of the battalion have been directed to exercise caution and when possible, avoid firing during heavy rainfall.

## c. Operations and Intelligence

(1) Missions: During the reporting period elements of the battalion were used in the following missions or roles:

- (a) Perimeter security.
- (b) Convoy escort.
- (c) Security of road clearing parties.
- (d) Road outposting.
- (e) Blocking force or flank security.
- (f) Direct fire support of maneuver elements to include:
  - 1 Reconnaissance by fire.
  - 2 Preparatory fires.
  - 3 Covering fires.
  - 4 On call, will adjust, direct fires.
- (g) H&I fires for base perimeter.
- (h) Search and destroy.
- (i) Village seal.
- (j) Mobile reserve or ready reactionary force.
- (k) Riverine fire base or patrol.
- (l) Helilift operations.

## (2) Operations and Intelligence Function

The battalion operations and intelligence section continued to function as a point of coordination between major supported commands, as an AW advisor for major supported commands, and keeping the commander informed of the current tactical situation as it pertains to elements of the battalion and of any problems that exist that would effect the battalion capability to satisfactorily perform their mission.

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## (3) Training

(a) To date the battalion has received nearly 140 replacements. Of these about one third have been common specialists, one third 13F's trained at Fort Bliss, and one third other MOS's for retraining or OJT as 13F's. While all replacements receive a brief in-country orientation, personnel for retraining or OJT as 13F's have required familiarization training on the M-42 and M-55. The instruction has been given by the battalion utilizing the minimum of time for essential training to enable replacements to safely perform their mission as a member of a tactical crew. This training has proved adequate for small numbers at one time; however, the following problems become apparent when considering the training of replacements in larger quantities, as will be required in the near future.

1 There is virtually no equipment available to conduct the training. All equipment is presently tactically deployed.

2 There is a lack of instructor base. In order not to degrade the batteries tactical capability, instructor personnel have come from Headquarters Battery resources. No such base is provided by TOE and its requirement detracts from other battalion efforts.

3 Facilities for training are limited. A small ARVN tank range is available occasionally; however, range time has been limited and largely unpredictable as far as scheduling is concerned. There is no air defense range or facility for firing at aerial targets. This is no real problem because, the battalion has no air defense mission. The requirement for annual service practice this year has been canceled.

(b) The bulk of the battalion rotation for officers, NCO's, and EM is programmed over a forty-five day period extending from 23 September 1967 through 8 November 1967. To give an indication of the magnitude of the problem, the actual requisitions that have been placed against known losses for the rotation period are as follows:

	<u>OFFICERS</u>	<u>NCO's (13F40)</u>	<u>EM (E-4)(13F10)</u>
September	20	43	123
October	<u>22</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>236</u>
TOTAL	42	143	359

(c) It will be difficult, at best, to provide continuity during this time. Officers and NCO's are vitally important due to the dispersion of the battalion. Platoons, section and squads operate autonomously as a rule. Overlap between personnel will be a minimum. A smooth transition can occur provided trained replacements in the officer, NCO, and EM category are received.

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### (d) Maintenance

1 The critical lack of backup maintenance capability (DS and GS) started to lessen during the reporting period. Ordnance units have started providing more and more maintenance services. During the reporting period one fire control repair job order and several component rebuild job orders were completed. A severe shortage of spare parts still exists. As an example, at one time 3 M-42's were deadlined for voltage regulators which is normally a DX item. The mean time to repair is now 4 to 5 days as compared to 2 days for the previous reporting period. ✓

2 The battalion has sustained a total of five M-42 combat losses thru mine damage. Only one replacement M-42 has been received to date. This replacement, plus the four battalion floats, were used to replace the combat losses. No date has been forecast as to when replacement M-42's will be received. There are currently no floats on hand to replace future combat losses. ✓

3 The battalion has sustained a total of two M-55 combat losses through ground attack damage. (See Section II) Two replacement M-55's have been received, however, the cal .50 machine guns and Basic Issue Listed Items have not arrived. As an interim measure, the float M-55 with its machine guns was issued for one of the losses. One replacement M-55 was also issued in an area where 3 other M-55's are deployed together and one cal .50 machine gun removed from each of the other three mounts. The defense presently has four "Tri 50's". ✓

4 The chart below shows a comparative summary of mining incidents and major parts usage. Batteries A and C were used primarily as maneuver forces while batteries B and D were used as direct fire support artillery.

	<u>MINES</u>	<u>ENGINES</u>	<u>TRANSMISSION</u>	<u>FINAL DRIVE</u>	<u>ROAD WHEELS</u>
Battery A	9	9	0	1	13
Battery B	2	2	1	1	0
Battery C	3	18	1	0	40
Battery D	3	1	1	0	10

### SECTION II, Part I - Observation / Lessons Learned

#### Automatic Weapons Employment Techniques in RVN (U)

Item - (U) Automatic Weapons employment techniques in RVN differ from those presently outlined in doctrinal and applicatory manuals and from those presently taught at service schools and replacement training centers.

Discussion: (C) The missions assigned elements of the battalion have been relisted below with a general narrative description of each.

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a. Perimeter Security - AW elements are operational control to the controlling headquarters of the perimeter. They obtain permission to fire and effect fire coordination thru the headquarters. Both direct fire capabilities and indirect fire H&I capabilities are utilized.

b. Convoy Escort - AW elements are integrated into the convoy with the other fire-power that is available. The convoy commander controls fires. Each element is assigned specific sectors of fire in the event of an ambush. First priority is to break thru the ambush; second priority is to stand and fight. Major convoys are always provided air cover and artillery cover on an "On Call" basis along the route.

c. Security of Road Clearing Parties and Road Outposting - Along priority roads, an engineer element will be attached to the AW element. They will precede the AW element and clear, destroy, or disarm mines as they are located. As the sweep continues AW elements are dropped off to outpost the road during the duration of usage. Distance between AW should not exceed mutual support or visual observation distance to adjacent AW elements, whichever distance is less. Usually the visual observation distance will be the dictating criteria.

d. Blocking Force or Flank Security - AW elements are positioned so as to block the withdrawal of enemy forces, to channelize him into a specific area, or to secure the flank of maneuver elements. There is an urgent requirement for thorough fire coordination. All elements must be kept informed continuously of friendly units locations.

e. Direct Fire Support or H&I Fires - Both the M-42 and the M-55 have been used extensively in direct fire support. The squad leader or the supported unit commander designates the target. Targets can be preplanned as in preparation fires or targets of opportunity that present themselves as the tactical situation develops. Visual observation of the target area is required. In the case of the M-42, the guns are laid using either the manual or power mode of operation. Power operation is sometimes preferred when the tactical situation requires some of the crew members to be performing duties away from the M-42, eg; filling sandbags, preparing defensive positions, etc. H&I fires are generally conducted at night in the immediate vicinity of the fire base perimeter. Targets are selected through map inspection or visual reconnaissance. Typical targets are probable mortar positions, defensive positions, routes of approach, etc. Indirect fire direction procedures are used and visual observation of the target is not necessary. The M-55 cannot be used effectively in this role due to the lack of a means to accurately lay the weapon in azimuth or elevation. The M-42, with its M-27 azimuth indicator and a gunners quadrant can be laid quite accurately in both azimuth and elevation. Manual operation is necessary. Firing can be single gun, both guns, single fire, or automatic fire depending on the effect desired. Maximum range experienced has been at tracer burn out between 3500 and 4000 meters. Firing data is developed at an AW FDC. Firing tables have been locally converted to meters. With the guns laid or oriented on grid north, a firing azimuth and elevation can be developed and applied to the M-42 and the mission fired with good accuracy. Results to date appear to be good. Feedback has indicated the VC do not like the "Flare from the Sky" and the "Fast Firing Flare Gun".

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SUBJECT: Operational Report for Quarterly Period 9 June 1967  
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f. Search and Destroy - This mission has resulted from AW attachment to armored cavalry units. Cross attachment with the cavalry units is common. One platoon of APC's is attached to the M-42 battery minus and one platoon of M-42's is attached to the armored cavalry troop minus resulting in two composite organizations. In this type mission the M-42 is used as a tank. The results are marginal when compared with the resulting maintenance requirements. M-42's hit mines 3 time more often as those performing other missions. Engine life was reduced by two thirds from hard sustained driving in a jungle environment. In many instances the M-42 was unable to fire without creating a hazard to friendly troops from the sensitive quick fuze detonating in close in dense foliage.

g. Village Seal - This mission was performed in conjunction with maneuver elements. During the hours of darkness a friendly force surrounds a village or hamlet and seals it to personnel entering or leaving. At daylight national police enter the village and check identification to insure no enemy are present. The M-42 and M-55 provide direct fire support in the event an enemy force attempts to break the seal.

h. Mobile Reserve or Ready Reaction Force - In the event a perimeter is too large to allow complete coverage by AW, the AW elements are held in a centralized location on 5 or 10 minutes alert and are committed at the portion of the perimeter where needed. The same centralized concept is used to provide a reaction force for elements outside the perimeter that are in contact and require relief. In the case of the latter, infantry should be attached and make up part of the reactionary force.

i. Riverine Fire Base or Patrol - In one case two M-55's were placed on motorized rafts and patrolled the rivers in an area of operations. Their mission was to allow only authorized river traffic to pass and prevent enemy forces from using the river as a resupply means or an escape route. Their response to sniper fire from along the banks of the river also discouraged the enemy from using them as a hiding place.

j. Heli-lift Operations - The M-55 has been used extensively to provide direct fire support and perimeter security in areas where elements occupied positions by helicopter. The M-55 with its basic load and crew can be lifted by one CH-47 sortie. The M-55 with the basic load in an A-22 bag are sling loaded and the crew rides inside. One key point in this type of operation is gormane. Due to the large amount of dust and debris caused by the helicopter prop wash it is necessary to clean the machine guns immediately upon occupying the position. Reassembly necessitates headspacing, timing, and solenoid adjustment. In order to insure operational readiness after reassembly, it is necessary to coordinate with friendly units and test fire all machine guns. Also during the actual lift, damage has been sustained when the lifting sling became tangled under one or more of the barrels. The damages sustained were broken shear pins, (Item K and L fig 44, TM 9-1005-209-34) and a broken tip on the drive shaft of the torque, (Item 22, fig 44, TM 9-1005-209-34).

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In one case an M-18 reflex sight was damaged. In an effort to preclude further damage during helicopter lift operations the following procedures have been instituted by this battalion.

- (1) Barrels will be removed and carried as an internal load.
- (2) When possible, machine gun receiver groups will be covered in a manner so as to protect them from dirt and debris.
- (3) The M-18 Reflex Sight is removed and carried as an internal load.
- (4) The machine gun mount will be placed at minimum elevation.

Observation - Elements of the battalion can accomplish their assigned missions; however, experience has shown the use of M-42's to be undesirable and in some cases ineffective in Search and Destroy type operations.

### M-55 in Perimeter Security Role (U)

Item: (U) M-55's are a cornerstone in any perimeter so long as they are properly located and protected, and that operational readiness is insured.

Discussion: (U) During the reporting period, two M-55's were located at a Fire Support Base in War Zone C which the VC attempted to overrun with mortar preparation and a ground attack follow-up. During the ensuing battle, one crew found that only two of their four machine guns operated normally. This same mount was subsequently hit by a RPG-2 round in the lower portion of the mount and destroyed. The second mount continued to operate normally throughout the engagement. After the initial attack only two alternate guns were fired at a time in order to allow cooling.

Observations: (C) The following points must be considered during any initial emplacement of M-55's in a perimeter security role.

a. A very minimum of two hundred yards field of fire is needed in order to detect and engage RPG-2 and recoilless rifle gunners. In addition if this type of weapon can be held at that distance, their probability of a direct hit is greatly reduced.

b. Positions must be fortified with a minimum thickness of three sandbags stacked to the height of the lower guns at minimum elevation.

c. Bat wing type shields are an absolute necessity. During the engagement there were fifteen hits from small arms on the shields that have been fabricated locally for all M-55's.

d. To insure maximum operational readiness, weapons must be test fired after initial emplacement and after each cleaning.

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Ending 30 April 1967, RCS-CSFOR-65 (U)

9 June 1967

## Integrated Automatic Weapons and Searchlight Operation (U)

Item: (U) The capabilities of the M-42 and M-55 can be enhanced by using a searchlight as a target acquisition device during night operations.

Discussion: (U) The searchlight being a line of sight target acquisition device and the M-42 and M-55 being essentially a direct fire weapon, their capabilities tend to complement one another. The integrated use, especially during night perimeter security operations, significantly enhances the capability to detect intruders and insure timely engagement. Searchlights and M-42's have been employed together in several cases. Target coordination and firing techniques are being studied and evaluated by the battalion.

Observation: (U) Firing techniques for integrated M-42 or M-55 and searchlight operations are feasible and will be developed by the battalion. Techniques will be published upon completion.

## SECTION II, Part 2 - Recommendations

None

JOHN D. LEWIS  
LTC, Artillery  
Commanding

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AFB-PAC (9 June 67)

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SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lessons Learned

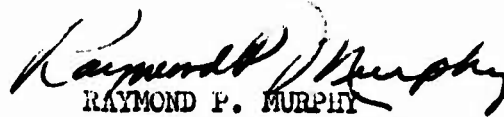
DA, Hq, II FFORCEV Arty, APO 96266 12 JUN 1967

THRU: Commanding General, II Field Force Vietnam, APO 96266  
Commanding General, United States Army Vietnam, ATTN: AVHGC-DH,  
APO 96307  
Commander-In-Chief, United States Army Pacific, ATTN: GPCP-JT,  
APO 96558

TO: Assistant Chief of Staff for Force Development, Department of the  
Army, Washington, D. C. 20310

1. The quarterly report of the 5th Battalion (AW) (SP), 2d Artillery adequately reflects the operations and lessons learned during the reporting period.

2. Reference Section II, Part I, the joint employment of the automatic weapons and the 23" XENON Searchlight has been extremely effective; however, techniques are still being developed and tested.

  
RAYMOND P. MURPHY  
Brigadier General, USA  
Commanding

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AVFBC-H (9 Jun 67) 2d Ind  
SUBJECT: Operational Report-Lessons Learned, 5th Battalion (AW) (SP),  
2d Artillery, 30 Apr 67 (RCS COMFOR-65)

DA, HQ II FFORCEV, APO San Francisco 96266 16 JUN 1967

THRU: Commanding General, USARV, ATTN: AVHGC-DH, APO 96307

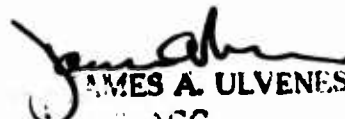
Commander in Chief, US Army Pacific, ATTN: GPOP-MH, APO 96558

TO: Assistant Chief of Staff for Force Development, Dept of the  
Army, Washington, D.C. 20310

1. (U) The inclosed report is forwarded.
2. (U) Concur with all comments and recommendations in the report  
and 1st Indorsement.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

2 Incl  
nc

  
JAMES A. ULVENES  
AGC  
AG

AVHCC-DST

3d Ind

SUBJECT: Operational Report-Lessons Learned for the Period Ending  
30 April 1967 (RCS CSFOR-65) (U)

HEADQUARTERS, UNITED STATES ARMY, VIETNAM, APO San Francisco 96307 10 10 10

TO: Commander in Chief, United States Army, Pacific, ATTN: GPOP-OT,  
APO 96558

1. This headquarters has reviewed the Operational Report-Lessons Learned for the period ending 30 April 1967 from Headquarters, 5th Battalion (AW)(SF) 2d Artillery as indorsed.

2. Pertinent comments follow:

a. Reference item concerning rotation of officers, NCO's and enlisted men, paragraph 3b and c, page 6: Concur. This command requisitions qualified replacements to arrive with sufficient overlap between personnel. An assurance of complete and timely fill action by DA is beyond the ability of this headquarters to predict.

b. Reference item concerning a severe shortage of spare parts, paragraph 3(d) 1, page 7: Concur, however, referenced paragraph does not provide adequate background information to enable this headquarters to take corrective action. Only one example of the severe shortages is cited. A message will be dispatched to unit requesting a list of current spare parts shortages.

c. Reference item concerning shortage of M-42's, paragraph 3(d) 2, page 7: Concur. Twenty nine each M42A1's have been released for shipment by AMC. Lift information is expected to arrive at this headquarters in the near future.

d. Reference item concerning shortage of officers, paragraph (4)(b), page 3: Concur. Priority action will be given to provision of three captains ASAP to relieve critical situation in subject unit.

FOR THE COMMANDER:





GPOP-DT (9 Jun 67)

4th Ind

SUBJECT: Operational Report for the Quarterly Period Ending 30 April 1967  
from HQ, 5th Bn (AW)(SP), 2d Arty (RCS CSFOR-65)

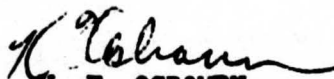
HQ, US ARMY, PACIFIC, APO San Francisco 96558

3 OCT 1967

TO: Assistant Chief of Staff for Force Development, Department of the  
Army, Washington, D. C. 20310

This headquarters has evaluated subject report and forwarding  
indorsements and concurs in the report as indorsed.

FOR THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF:

  
K. F. OSBOURN  
MAJ, AGC  
Asst AG